

Running head: EFFECTS OF COOPERATIVE LABOR MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIPS

Executive Leadership

Effects of Cooperative Labor Management Relationships

Scott M. Gorgon

North Las Vegas Fire Department, North Las Vegas, Nevada

April 2008

Abstract

The North Las Vegas Fire Department needs to create a cooperative labor-management relationship. The purpose of this research was to investigate a means which would allow the organization to enhance its ability to build a cooperative labor-management partnership. Descriptive research was applied to consider the necessary requirements, adaptations, creation of common goals, and determine how organizational effectiveness would be enhanced. The results of this research found that cooperation, collaboration, and a labor-management relationship would allow for an increase in operational efficiency and effectiveness. Following nationally recognized fire service partnerships, and human management philosophies was the leading recommendation of this research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	2
Introduction	5
Background and Significance	6
Literature Review	8
Procedures	16
Limitations	18
Research Methodology	18
Results	18
Discussion	20
Recommendations	24
References	26
Appendix A Questionnaire	28
Appendix A Questionnaire results	29
Appendix B Second Questionnaire	30
Appendix B Second Questionnaire	31
Appendix C Internal Questionnaire	32
Appendix C Internal Questionnaire	33

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: _____

Introduction

The City of North Las Vegas stretches across the northern rim of the Las Vegas Valley. The City, which was incorporated in 1946, encompasses 82.2 square miles within Clark County, in Southern Nevada. North Las Vegas is the fastest growing large city in America. “Since 2000, [the] North Las Vegas population has grown by 86.2 percent, making it home to about 215,026 residents through December 2007 (City of North Las, 2008, p. 3)”. Roughly, 1,200 new residents move to North Las Vegas each month. North Las Vegas is the fourth largest city in Nevada. North Las Vegas estimates that by the time it reaches build out in 2035, its population will be 586,548. The City embraces its diversity, living up to its motto of being “Your Community of Choice.”

The City of North Las Vegas is a full service municipality, providing recreational amenities, police and fire protection, and water service. It operates under a Council-Manager form of government, with a Mayor and four Council members. The City of North Las Vegas has three key labor unions, (Fire, Police and Teamsters) that represent employees. There are many differences that characterize current labor unions and management within our city, including but not limited to philosophical, social and political ideology.

To clearly understand the nature of our problems, one must look at how the current labor unions interact with management. My research problem is how the North Las Vegas Fire Department management and the International Association of Firefighters Local 1607 utilize a cooperative labor and management relationship to create a joint strength and advance fire services in our community.

The purpose of this applied research project (ARP) is to identify existing ways in which labor and management can create a cooperative setting which will advance the goals of the fire

department and be supportive to our community. Descriptive research will be used to study the present situation and give answers for improving our relationships.

This applied research project will address the following questions:

1. What has been the working relationship between labor and management in America?
2. What are the correlations between labor and management in America and the American fire service?
3. What has been the long established relationship between labor and management in the North Las Vegas Fire Department?

Background and Significance

The City of North Las Vegas stretches across the northern rim of the Las Vegas Valley. The City, which was incorporated in 1946, encompasses 82.2 square miles within Clark County, in Southern Nevada. North Las Vegas is the fastest growing large city in America. “Since 2000, [the] North Las Vegas population has grown by 86.2 percent, making it home to about 215,026 residents through December 2007 (City of North Las, 2008, p. 3)”. Roughly, 1,200 new residents move to North Las Vegas each month. North Las Vegas is the fourth largest city in Nevada. North Las Vegas estimates that by the time it reaches build out in 2035, its population will be 586,548. The City embraces its diversity, living up to its motto of being “Your Community of Choice.”

In the past, the North Las Vegas Fire Department has struggled to come to terms with its underperforming labor/management relations. Since the early nineteen sixties labor and management have grappled to build a cooperative relationship in my community. There have always been winners and losers in our labor/management relations. What has been forged is a

long history and philosophy of directing energy on defeating the other side at all cost. As stated by Dennis Compton "The way the workforce and management interact has a direct impact on the quality of service the customers receive, internally and externally" (Compton, 2003, p. 22).

I consider that the success of today's fire service will rely mainly on two very essential ideologies. These ideologies are cooperation and understanding. At present time, if we do not begin working toward humanizing relations and building partnerships, then we might not have to worry about the future. Our department presently struggles with the concept of cooperative labor and management relationships. Thomas Paine, a founding father, made a statement in the eighteenth century which set the stage for the development of cooperative relationships: "If we do not hang together, we shall surely hang..." (Thomas Paine, 1776). The impact of not addressing the problem in my organization is multifaceted. Regrettably, the fire service is just like many other industries. We have simply accepted the existing state of affairs with our labor management relations as the way it has always been. For many years the old, comfortable style has been used with terms such as adversarial, antagonistic, or win-lose, which described the very traditional relationship between labor and management in the fire service.

My applied research project is directly related to the Executive Fire Officers Program and the Executive Leadership course that was just completed. The definitive linkage between the research problem and specific content from my last course is as follows: Managing multiple roles, introduction to influence, networking, and developing self as a leader. My research topic relates to, and supports one of the five United States Fire Administrations (USFA) operational objectives, which is to respond appropriately in a timely manner to emerging issues.

Literature Review

The literature review gathered and reviewed pertinent information as it relates to how the North Las Vegas Fire Department management and the International Association of Firefighters Local 1607 can utilize a cooperative labor and management relationship to create joint strength and advance fire services in our community. The preparation for this research included; published applied research projects of the executive fire officers program, fire service and management journals, periodicals, and books. The literature review was conducted by the author at the National Fire Academy's Learning Research Center (NFALRC). Additional research was conducted at the Clark County Library District; the internet was also used to provide specific information on the City of North Las Vegas, and was used to provide additional information from the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center.

Early efforts to form trade unions were violently suppressed by laws forbidding organization as a criminal conspiracy in restraint of trade. It was long hard struggle for employees in England and Europe to gain the rights to organize and bargain collectively. It took nearly 200 years in the United States. Today these rights are held in nearly all nations. Labor, in this sense, is triumphant. But unions in the United States today face new sets of problems and challenges, the outcomes of which could well determine their very existence in the next few decades.

The first associations of workers, merchant guilds and craft guilds, formed during the Middle Ages in Europe. Merchant guilds, which arose in the 11th century, consisted of the merchants and traders in a city who banded together. Craft guilds, first formed in the 12th century, included people who were engaged in a particular craft, and they gradually deprived merchant guilds of their power. In time, journeymen members of craft unions organized their

own associations to seek higher wages and improved working conditions. These associations are considered the forerunners of labor unions because of their emphasis on wages and working conditions.

The earliest actual labor unions arose in Western Europe and the United States at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. They were formed by skilled crafts workers in reaction to the rapid changes in the economic environment brought about by industrialization. The concentration of work in large factories left workers increasingly dependent upon their employers.

The struggle of workers in 18th and 19th century America led to the initial stages of a national labor policy. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the labor movement had grown to about three million members (NLRB, 1996). President Woodrow Wilson took steps to promote labor peace by creating a tripartite War Labor Board in 1918. Although the War Labor Board did not have enforcement powers, labor and management agreed to refrain from strikes or lockouts as a result of its mediating efforts. The War Labor Board recognized the right of workers to organize in trade unions and to bargain collectively through chosen representatives. During its short life, the Board handled 1,200 cases affecting 700,000 workers.

In February 1935, Senator Wagner introduced the National Labor Relations Act in the Senate. The Wagner Bill proposed to create a new independent agency to enforce rights rather than to mediate disputes. It would obligate employers to bargain collectively with union selected by a majority of the employees in an appropriate bargaining unit. The measure endorsed the principles of exclusive representation and majority rule, provided for enforcement of the Boards rulings, and covered most workers in industries whose operations affected interstate commerce.

Wagner's Bill passed the Senate in May 1935, cleared the house in June, and was signed into law by President Roosevelt on July 5, 1935.

For more than a century now, labor unions have been celebrated in folk songs and popular myth as fearless champions of the oppressed working man, while "the bosses" are depicted as compassionless exploiters of employees. But from the point of view of economists—including many who are avowedly pro-union—unions are simply cartels that raise wages above competitive levels by capturing monopolies over who companies can hire and what they must pay (Morgan O. Reynolds, 2004). Unions depend on government support and protection. Unions grew in surges during the two world wars and the Great Depression of the thirties. Federal interventions—the Railway Act of 1926 (amended in 1934), the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931, the Norris-LaGuardia Act of 1932, the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, the Walsh-Healy Act of 1936, the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, various War Labor Boards, and the Kennedy administration's encouragement of public-sector unionism in 1962. This all added to unions' growth and power.

The IAFF was formed in 1918 to unite fire fighters—for better wages, improved safety, and greater service for their communities (International, 2002). At a time when fire fighters worked seven days a week, had little benefits, and safety meant putting a wet towel over your face before running into flames, the IAFF became the voice of the fire fighter, the protector of the protector. IAFF history is this legacy-of safety achievements, political accomplishments, and every success our locals achieve. The IAFF is always on the frontline and has been the leader in advancements that have improved the service and lives of our members.

Managing human resources is a vital task in any organization, large or small, regardless of product or service. As pointed out in Steven T. Edwards book, Fire Service Personnel

Management, the more effectively an organization manages its human resources, the more successful the organization is going to be (Steven T. Edwards, 2000, p. 1). Management in private sector organizations is often proposed as a model for managing in the public sector. However, many believe that management in the public sector is unique because of its relation to the democratic process, which is the cornerstone of U. S. society. The Hawthorne experiments and the work of Elton Mayo during the 1920s and early 1930s introduced a new and important theory of management encompassing human behavior “organizational humanism,” or the human relations movement. Mayo, using a series of elaborate interviews, determined that the employees responded to factors relating to them as individuals and to their individual needs. These factors included attention recognition, and being listened to by management.

The research resulting from Mayo’s work propelled management theory into a completely new era, in which managers use behavioral science principles to view organizational behavior. The behavior scientists looked in depth at organizational behavior, organizational and group structures, leadership styles, and how these interact with employee characteristics in affecting work output and efficiency. Work in this area included that of, Abraham Maslow and Douglas McGregor.

Maslow is best known for his concept of the hierarchy of needs, which he used to explain employee motivation. He classified needs in ascending order of urgency (Paul D. Sweeney, 2002):

1. Physiological needs
2. Safety needs
3. Social needs
4. Ego needs

5. Self-Actualization needs

Douglas McGregor described two views of motivation: Theory X, which assumes that people dislike work, lack ambition and need coercive direction, backed up by the threat of negative sanctions, to work toward organizational goals; and Theory Y, which assumes that people find satisfaction in work, seek responsibility willingly, and exercise imagination and self direction when they are committed to organizational objectives (Jack W. Snook, 1988).

In Japan, after World War II, American occupation forces brought in American experts in statistical control methods and who were familiar with the War Department's Training Within Industry (TWI) training programs to restore the nation. TWI programs included Job Instruction (standard work) and Job Methods (process improvement). In conjunction with the Shewhart cycle taught by W. Edwards Deming, and other statistics-based methods taught by Joseph M. Juran, these methods became the basis of the kaizen revolution in Japan that took place in the 1950s.

The Toyota Production System is known for kaizen, where all line personnel are expected to stop their moving production line in case of any abnormality and, along with their supervisor, suggest an improvement to resolve the abnormality which may initiate a kaizen. The cycle of kaizen activity can be defined as: standardize an operation, measure the standardized operation (find cycle time and amount of in-process inventory), gauge measurements against requirements, innovate to meet requirements and increase productivity, standardize the new, improved operations, and continue cycle ad infinitum. This is also known as the Shewhart cycle, Deming cycle, or PDCA.

Masaaki Imai made the term Kaizen famous in his book, Kaizen: The Key to Japan's Competitive Success (Masaaki Imai, 1986). Apart from business applications of the method,

both Anthony Robbins and Robert Maurer have popularized the kaizen principles into personal development principles. The basis of Robbins' Constant and Never-Ending Improvement (CANI) method in kaizen is discussed in his Lessons in Mastery series (Tony Robbins, 1991). Kaizen is a daily activity whose purpose goes beyond simple productivity improvement. It is also a process that, when done correctly, humanizes the workplace, eliminates overly hard work, and teaches people how to perform experiments on their work using the scientific method, and how to learn to spot and eliminate waste in business processes. To be most effective kaizen must operate with three principles in place:

- consider the process and the results (not results-only) so that actions to achieve effects are surfaced;
- systemic thinking of the whole process and not just that immediately in view (i.e. big picture, not solely the narrow view) in order to avoid creating problems elsewhere in the process; and
- A learning, non-judgmental, non-blaming (because blaming is wasteful) approach and intent will allow the re-examination of the assumptions that resulted in the current process.

People at all levels of an organization can participate in kaizen, from the CEO down, as well as external stakeholders when applicable. The format for kaizen can be individual, suggestion system, small group, or large group. At Toyota, it is usually a local improvement within a workstation, or local area, and involves a small group in improving their own work environment and productivity. While kaizen usually delivers small improvements, the culture of continual aligned small improvements and standardization yields large results in the form of compound productivity improvement.

Collaboration greatly enhances an organization's chances of success. Historically, collaboration applies to agencies, but it can be more effective among agencies, families, and neighborhoods, because it creates lasting relationships and uses resources effectively. Collaboration can range from informal partnerships to formally planned relationships. In any case, it almost always provides opportunities for building relationships. It can also be a powerful way to enhance the well-being of agencies, families, and neighborhoods.

The steps to successful collaborations are (Paul D. Sweeney, 2002, p. 249):

- Identify stakeholders and invite key players with both clout and passion to collaborate. Successful collaborators plan ahead before all the stakeholders are assembled at the table. When planning a collaborative effort, potential partners should consider employees needs, and use them to define goals. Partners also should decide which stakeholders would benefit most from participation, and how each stakeholder's expertise and resources can benefit the collaboration.
- Have collaborators state their reasons for wanting to participate and after determining who the partners will be consider these questions: Is the collaboration designed to share resources and expertise to serve a community need? Or is its goal to map community services and tap into a community's pulse?
- Get a commitment to stated goals and if the collaboration is mandated, it is difficult to create a sense of shared ownership, and without shared ownership and common goals, the probability of success is low.

Consider such questions as:

- Who has the commitment to the issue and the ability to mobilize resources?
- Who has a stake in pursuing this issue?
- Do they have special skills, authority or knowledge to assist the collaboration?
- Will the benefits of collaboration outweigh the costs?

Because conflict is inevitable in any group process with high stakes, collaboration is challenging. Conflict resolution and consensus-building skills are often the keys to success. Building trust is also essential. Without trust, partners will not openly express concerns. Partnering can range from just sharing information between two parties to full decision making on the strategic business issues of a company. The problems begin when the concept of partnership is thrown out on the table with little regard for intent and clarity. What is becoming increasingly evident is that the art of developing a partnership is something that needs much care and attention. It is also becoming quite apparent at work sites (such as Saturn, Magma Copper, Xerox and Levi Strauss), where considerable time has been spent in defining and developing partnerships, that the need to be explicit about goals, boundaries, and intended outcomes from the start is critical to the partnership's success (Lazes, 1995, p. 2).

In 1994, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) began a program known as "Fire Service Leadership Seminars" for fire chiefs and labor union presidents to come together to form partnerships in order to develop a new philosophy for labor/management relationships. The goal of the program was to jointly advocate a customer service philosophy, increase fire service employee involvement in goal setting, and developing trust and cooperation between

labor and management. The Fire Service Leadership program is now provided in a sign of cooperation between the IAFC and the International Association of Fire Fighters.

In summary the reviewed literature has influenced this applied research project by establishing the need for continued collaboration, and forming a labor/management partnership. The information attained from the literature will be used to focus on present needs and ways to improve our current issues.

Procedures

The purpose of this applied research project was to find answers on cooperative labor and management relationships. Research collection began with a literature review at the National Fire Academy's learning resource center in July 2007. Literature reviews were conducted and collected from articles in fire service trade magazines, executive fire officer applied research projects, and fire service books, and the private sector. Reviews were then conducted at the Clark County Public Library and on the internet. The author's personal collection of fire service books and collegiate books were reviewed for potential information. Criteria used to collect and identify information that would be useful for the intent of this applied research was two-fold. The first, being details that would need to be relevant to the subject matter and to the applied research project. The second is that the information would need to be up to date with the current thoughts, and knowledge in the fire service.

Using the information found in the literature review, a questionnaire instrument was developed and distributed to members of the fire service. The author sent the questionnaire instrument to two hundred fire departments across the United States. The fire departments surveyed were made up of combination (career/volunteer) and career departments. The

population of protection coverage for these communities ranged from fifty thousand to over two hundred and fifty thousand. Total suppression personnel in the departments surveyed ranged from under fifty personnel to over two hundred line personnel. One hundred and thirty six questionnaires were returned and were evaluated for content. The return rate represented a sixty eight percent return. The questionnaire instrument was used to provide demographic information and to provide specific data on cooperative labor and management relationships. The purpose of the questions was to evaluate what other organizations are doing for cooperative labor and management relationships.

Upon evaluation of the questions it was determined that another questionnaire would need to be used. A second questionnaire was sent out to an additional one hundred fire departments, I would only have a forty five percent return rate. This second questionnaire concentrated on answering three additional questions:

1. Do you have a collaborative work environment?
2. Has your department looked for ways to improve the labor and management relationship?
3. Has your department had any success in their labor and management relationship?

The first questionnaire did not provide me with the needed information to compare and contrast departments that have collaborative relationships and those that do not. The completed surveys and the results can be found in Appendix A & B. An internal questionnaire was developed to find information regarding current feeling within the organization by line personnel. This survey was emailed out to all line personnel (160). The return rate on this questionnaire was 84%.

Limitations

Several limitations were experienced while completing the research for this applied research project. Research information with regards to labor and management partnerships and collaborative work environments has not been well documented by fire service labor and fire departments over the years.

Research Methodology

The preferred conclusion of this applied research project was to find answers and solutions for a cooperative labor and management relationship to create joint strength and advance fire services in our community. Descriptive research methodologies were utilized to help guide the applied research project and help find the answers to the research questions. The research was descriptive in nature and a literature review was conducted to evaluate current literature that was applicable to the research questions. Development of additional pointed questions in the future should provide better correlation between departments and a cooperative labor and management relationship.

Results

The results of the literature review and the questionnaire provided the following answers to research question 1: What has been the working relationship between labor and management in America? The Literature showed that the labor movement was started to bring better working conditions and pay for the American worker. The American Labor movement and their position was the beginning of many years of legislation to promote workers rights. It ultimately created animosity and contentious times for management and labor. Unions seem to be perpetually at a crossroads. Those in the private sector have suffered membership declines for more than 45 years and even under the dynamic leadership of AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, they will be

hard pressed to reverse the powerful tide against unions in the private sector. In government, union membership has been stagnant since the 1980s (Kearney, 2001). Research identified the traditional relationship between labor and management as adversarial. The relationship has been further described as hostile, self serving, burdened with disagreement, and challenging. Labor has existed to be in opposition to management and to advance the benefits of labor. Labor has used the media, courts, and grievance procedures, local, state, and federal politics to complete its work.

The questionnaire showed that 78% of the fire departments surveyed are covered by a firefighter union, 22% have no representation. It showed that of the fire departments surveyed 76% feel that they have a poor relationship between management and labor, which needs to be corrected. This questionnaire correlates with past and current history of management and labor in America.

The results of the literature review and the questionnaire provided the following answers to research question 2: What are the correlations between labor and management in America and the American fire service? The history of labor and management in America transcends the American Fire Service. The struggles and conflicts are almost parallel when you look at the literature that has been written in the American Labor Movement. The labor movement and the fire service have used politicians and lobbyist to get what has been needed to promote labor. Wage and benefit packages have closely grown over the years in both national labor and in the fire service. The one area that differs is in presumptive legislation for the fire service. The fire service has outpaced the American labor movement with extra benefits for its members.

The results of the literature review and the questionnaire provided the following answers to research question 3: What has been the long established relationship between labor and

management in the North Las Vegas Fire Department? The North Las Vegas Fire Department was established in 1946 and was a combination department for many years. In 1966, a union was organized by the membership and became part of the International Association of Fire Fighters. In the early years of the union, the relationship was fair. There was a sense of mistrust, which was created when the union was organized. Management felt that there was no need to form a union. They felt that it would only lead to problems in the future. As the years progressed into the seventies, issues started to arise. Conflict and aggression became the norm. Negotiations took on an ugly face during this time. They were long drawn out battles, which lead to an unfriendly atmosphere. During this period of time, the union took on city council members during which they recalled the whole city council. This was a successful venture, which only created a climate for mistrust and discontent.

During the eighties and nineties the union and management relationship deteriorated to an all time low. Every issue was a fight and ended in the grievance process. There were never any winners in this constant battle. It also leads to a poor relationship with the city manager and other important personnel with the city. A questionnaire was used within my organization to seek opinion and to find corrective solutions for building a management, labor relationship. The respondents were split on if we are an autocratic/democratic organization. 84% thought that creating a partnership between labor and management would help to bring cooperation and increase effectiveness to our organization and community.

Discussion

The relationship between the study results and specific findings of others provides interesting information on labor-management relationships. Significant obstacles stand in the path of labor-management cooperation. "The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) outdated

premise of adversarialism as the answer to all labor-management conflicts remains firmly embedded in the legal framework and mentality of most unionized jurisdictions” (Kearney, 2001, p. 343). The lengthy and emotional history of early organizing campaigns and bargaining encounters are tough to overcome.

Mutual distrust and suspicion prevail among union and management representatives in most bargaining settings. Management’s innate discomfort with unions is amplified by a nagging fear of losing authority and control over employees in the bargaining unit. Union leaders, many of whom made their reputations by aggressively fighting management, are fearful that consultative and participative management proposal will unleash demands to eliminate jobs, dilute union power, impose givebacks and concessions, and ultimately displace the union as the collective voice of workers. The sustained commitment of resources needed for successful participative decision making is always problematic in a political system characterized by frequent turnover of elected and appointed officials and personal political agendas.

Dennis Compton (Compton, 2003, p. 22) stated that “What happens on the inside of the organization directly impacts the quality of service delivered outside the organization, as well as the organization’s ability to address significant problems; there is simply no getting around this reality. An organization can not consistently deliver quality service in spite of itself; it cannot out perform its own self image”.

From the beginning of civilization, there has been conflict between those that direct the work and those that carry out the tasks. Some people will never get over their bitterness and will have to retire to remove the cancer from the fire service. Chief Russell E. Sanders stated

“I believe the only ways to truly win in labor-management relations, is to have no losers.

When we negotiate a contract, settle a dispute, or plan a new program, our primary goal must be to ensure that neither side is defeated” (Sander, 1994, p. 13).

In today’s fire service, there’s an essential need for the creation of a leadership partnership between local fire chiefs and their union presidents, as well as for the further development of a completely new philosophy of labor-management relations (IAFC Staff, 1999, p. 22). The reasoning behind this philosophy is based on two fundamentals:

- The individual members of the fire department are the foundation of that organization.
- The fire department can be no better or stronger than its firefighters and other employees.

There are many ways for management and labor to relate to one another. Some ways actually build a positive work environment that, in turn, contributes to the effective delivery of local government services. Others that are based upon distrust, enmity, and disagreement, however, injure the work environment and derail service delivery.

If services are to effectively delivered, labor-management relations must focus on forging a cooperative bond and on problem solving, rather than on positions of power and egos. First, effective organizations are based upon effective relationships, and these are based upon trust. You can only build one trust-based relationship at a time. But this kind of partnership can multiply more rapidly if an organization behaves in accordance with certain shared values, focusing on honesty, respect, empowerment, collaboration, transparent behavior, and open communication (Flint, 2002, p. 18).

An effective way to create cooperation is to consider using a labor-management committee (LMC). In a labor-management committee structure, representatives of unions and management

meet on a regular basis, as equals, to discuss issues that do not appear in the labor contract.

Elements you may wish to consider in developing an LMC include:

- Ensuring that there will be top level involvement on the part of both labor and management.
- Forming committees at several levels of the local government organization
- Involving a neutral third party to help facilitate discussions
- Encouraging initiatives from the bottom up, by having committees at the working levels provide ideas for consideration at the department level.

The link to understanding involving labor and management is based on communication and common sense. A dilemma cannot be resolved unless each side understands the other's role and function. A general lack of communication over shadows and exacerbates labor-management problems. In a survey conducted by William Bingham about labor-management relations an overwhelming majority stated there was a "strong correlation between the current labor/management relationship and the effectiveness and efficiency of their department" (Bingham, 1994, p. 124). Management and unions should work toward providing friendlier relationships and concentrating on developing common goals that represent the needs and consistent with delivering the best possible service in the most efficient manner.

My interpretation of the results of this research and others that have researched this topic is that we need to do a better job in the communication area. We need to open clear channels for the communication process to work within our organizations. We need to provide to our employees the training and resources to become effective communicators. We also need to look at creating a labor-management partnership within our organizations. I believe that the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and the International Association of Fire Chiefs

(IAFC) collectively need to continue to build an atmosphere that creates, develops and nurtures this relationship.

The implications of this research is that as leaders in labor-management organizations, we still have long to go. We have two choices, one we can continue the way we have in the past or secondly, we can look at organizations that have improved their labor-management relationship based on the concept of building partnerships. As the research has shown the benefits to labor-management, is priceless. My organization and community could benefit from such a partnership.

Recommendations

Nothing appears to be certain in our times, including the outlook for labor-management relations. The decisions made by the persons who will partake in the labor-management decision making process will determine the future. Labor and management must set aside individual political considerations and move collectively to target problem areas vital to labor-management. Within my organization, based on the literature and research, we must focus on the following:

- Create a labor-management committee
- Create a labor-management partnership
- Create an atmosphere that welcomes dialog
- Consider programs or processes that are working in the private sector

The benefits to my organization are endless, in fact, by adopting a common sense approach; we would be able to create an atmosphere that begins to improve our organization. That tone can start to build common goals, values and show others in the community that we are united in our enthusiasm for working together. Additional research needs to be conducted in the area of labor-management coalitions, problem solving and communication models for the fire

service. My recommendations to my organization will be to setup a committee to examine ways that we can collectively work together to improve relations and effectiveness to the community. I will recommend that the union president and fire chief attend the leadership partnership seminar provided by the IAFC/IAFF. My recommendations will need to be reevaluated to examine their effectiveness. My recommendations for other researchers are to continue searching for effective organizations that are being rewarded using the concepts employed by private organization. The purpose of improving the labor/management process is to make our organization more effective. The focus of the efforts is to gain the commitment of the members of the organization to the quality of services and/or products delivered internally and externally. The labor/management process assists in planning policy and developing operating procedures as well as resolving a variety of problems or issues that arise.

References

- Bingham, William L. (1994). Labor-management cooperation in the fire service [Labor-management cooperation in the fire service]. *Fire Engineering*, 147(3), 123-124.
- City of North Las Vegas. (2008). *2008 Community Report* (1st ed., Vol. 1) [Brochure]. North Las Vegas, Nevada: Author.
- Compton, Dennis R. (2003, November). Labor-management relations: why you should care. *Firehouse*, 28(11), p. 22-23.
- Flint, James. (2002). Mending labor-management relationships. *Public Management*, 84(7), 18-21.
- IAFC Staff. (1999). New partnership unites labor and management. *Fire Chief*, 43(2), p. 22.
- International Association of Firefighters. (2002). *History of the IAFF* (1st ed., Vol. 1) [Brochure]. Washington D.C, D.C: Author.
- Jack W. Snook. (1988). *Managing Fire Services* (2nd ed.) [Managing Fire Service] (Ronny J. Coleman, Ed.). Washington D.C, D.C: ICMA.
- Kearney, Richard C. (2001). *Labor relations in the public sector* (3rd ed., Vol. 0) [Labor relations in the public sector]. New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc.
- Lazes, Peter. (1995). Building effective labor-management partnerships. *Journal for Quality and Participation*, 20(6), 2.
- Masaaki Imai. (1986). *Kaizen: The Key To Japan's Competitive Success* (1st ed.) [Kaizen: The Key To Japan's Competitive Success]. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Morgan O. Reynolds. (2004). *Labor Unions* (1st ed., Vol. 1) [Labor Unions]. Retrieved January 2, 2008, from The library of economics and liberty Web site: <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/LaborUnions.html>

- NLRB. (1996). The story of the National Labor Relations Board: 1935-1995. In American Bar Association (Ed.), *The story of the National Labor Relations Board: 1935-1995* (1, pp. 1-45). Washington D.C, D.C: National Labor Relations Board.
- Paul D. Sweeney. (2002). *Organizational Behavior: Solution for Management* (1st ed.) [Organizational Behavior: Solution for Management]. New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.
- Sander, Russell E. (1994). seeing both sides eases labor relations. *Nfpa Journal*, 88(2), p. 13.
- Steven T. Edwards. (2000). *Fire Service Personnel Management* (1st ed.) [Fire Service Personnel Management]. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Brady/Prentice Hall Health.
- Thomas Paine Quotes* [Famous quotes]. (1776). Retrieved February 11, 2008, from thinkexist.com Web site: http://thinkexist.com/quotation/if_we_do_not_hang_together-we_shall_surely_hang/226014.html
- Tony Robbins. (1991). *Awaken the Giant Within* [Awaken the Giant Within]. Los Angeles: Fireside.

Appendix A

Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

My name is Scott Gorgon I work for the North Las Vegas Fire Department in Nevada. Currently I am enrolled in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). I would like to ask for your assistance with this brief questionnaire. Completing this will assist me with my EFOP Executive Leadership Applied Research Project (ARP).

*Note please return this questionnaire by October 31, 2007

1. What is your population? ☐ 1-50,000 ☐ 50,000 ☐ 100,000 ☐ 200,000 over
2. What type of organization are you? ☐ Career ☐ Combination ☐ Volunteer
3. How many suppression personnel do you have? ☐ 1-50 ☐ 51-100 ☐ 101-200 ☐ 201
over
4. How many fire stations do you currently have?
5. Do you provide fire and emergency medical services? ☐ Fire ☐ Medical ☐ Both
6. Does your fire department have a labor union?
7. Who represent your members (IAFF, teamsters, seiu or other)?
8. Do you believe you have a good relationship between management and labor?
9. Has your management and labor attended an IAFF/IAFC leadership partnership
course?

If you are interested in the results of this questionnaire, please indicate here and include a business card or complete the information below. I will be happy to provide you with the results when compiled:

Name:

☐ Please send me the results.

Address:

City and State:

Zip Code:

Appendix A

Questionnaire results

1. What is your population? ☐ 1-50,000 ☐ 50,000 ☐ 100,000 ☐ 200,000 over
29% = 1-50,000 - 24% = 50,000 - 35% = 100,000 - 12% = 200,000
2. What type of organization are you? ☐ Career ☐ Combination ☐ Volunteer
69% = Career - 31% = Combination
3. How many suppression personnel do you have? ☐ 1-50 ☐ 51-100 ☐ 101-200 ☐ 201 over
11% = 1-50 - 54% = 51-100 - 23% = 101-200 - 12% = 201 over
4. How many fire stations do you currently have?
Ranged from 1 to 54 stations
5. Do you provide fire and emergency medical services? ☐ Fire ☐ Medical ☐ Both
100% = Fire 73% = Medical 79% = Both
6. Does your fire department have a labor union?
78% = yes 22% = no
7. Who represent your members (IAFF, teamsters, seiu or other)?
92% = IAFF 8% = Teamsters
8. Do you believe you have a good relationship between management and labor?
24% = yes 76% = no
9. Has your management and labor attended an IAFF/IAFC leadership partnership course?
2% = yes 98% = no

Appendix B

Second Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

My name is Scott Gorgon I work for the North Las Vegas Fire Department in Nevada. Currently I am enrolled in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). I would like to ask for your assistance with this brief questionnaire. Completing this will assist me with my EFOP Executive Leadership Applied Research Project (ARP).

*Note please return this questionnaire by January 31, 2008

4. What is your population? ☐ 1-50,000 ☐ 50,000 ☐ 100,000 ☐ 200,000 over
5. What type of organization are you? ☐ Career ☐ Combination ☐ Volunteer
6. How many suppression personnel do you have? ☐ 1-50 ☐ 51-100 ☐ 101-200 ☐ 201 over
7. How many fire stations do you currently have?
8. Does your fire department have a labor union?
9. Who represent your members (IAFF, teamsters, seu or other)?
10. Do you believe you have a good relationship between management and labor?
11. Has your management and labor attended an IAFF/IAFC leadership partnership course?
12. Do you have a collaborate work environment?
13. Has your department looked for ways to improve the labor and management relationship?
14. Has your department had any success in their labor and management relationship?

Appendix B Second Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

My name is Scott Gorgon I work for the North Las Vegas Fire Department in Nevada. Currently I am enrolled in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). I would like to ask for your assistance with this brief questionnaire. Completing this will assist me with my EFOP Executive Leadership Applied Research Project (ARP).

*Note please return this questionnaire by January 31, 2008

1. What is your population? ☐ 1-50,000 ☐ 50,000 ☐ 100,000 ☐ 200,000 over
22% = 1-50,000 - 23% = 50,000 - 38% = 100,000 - 17% = 200,000
2. What type of organization are you? ☐ Career ☐ Combination ☐ Volunteer
82% = Career - 18% = Combination
3. How many suppression personnel do you have? ☐ 1-50 ☐ 51-100 ☐ 101-200 ☐ 201 over
7% = 1-50 - 58% = 51-100 - 18% = 101-200 - 17% = 201 over
4. How many fire stations do you currently have?
Ranged from 3 to 102 stations
5. Does your fire department have a labor union?
88% = yes 12% = no
6. Who represent your members (IAFF, teamsters, seiu or other)?
100 % = IAFF
7. Do you believe you have a good relationship between management and labor?
18% = yes 82% = no
8. Has your management and labor attended an IAFF/IAFC leadership partnership course?
100% = no
9. Do you have a collaborate work environment?
32% = yes 68% = no
10. Has your department looked for ways to improve the labor and management relationship?
96% = no 4% = yes
11. Has your department had any success in their labor and management relationship?
100% = no

Appendix C

Internal Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

Currently I am enrolled in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). I would like to ask for your assistance with this brief questionnaire. Completing this will assist me with my EFOP Executive Leadership Applied Research Project (ARP).

*Note please return this questionnaire by November 31, 2008

1. In your opinion what type of organizational management-leadership style is used in our organization?

Autocratic
Democratic
2. Do you believe that we have a cooperative labor-management process?

Yes
No
3. Are you happy with our labor-management relationship?

Yes
No
4. What ways can we improve our labor-management relationship?
5. Do you believe that creating labor-management committee/teams would help in this relationship?

Yes
No

Appendix C

Internal Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

Currently I am enrolled in the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). I would like to ask for your assistance with this brief questionnaire. Completing this will assist me with my EFOP Executive Leadership Applied Research Project (ARP).

*Note please return this questionnaire by November 31, 2008

1. In your opinion what type of organizational management-leadership style is used in our organization?
 Autocratic -**50%** Democratic-**50%**
2. Do you believe that we have a cooperative labor-management process?
 Yes – **45%** No- **55%**
3. Are you happy with our labor-management relationship?
 Yes – **42%** No – **58%**
4. What ways can we improve our labor-management relationship? **Creating a labor-management partnership.**
5. Do you believe that creating labor-management committee/teams would help in this relationship?
 Yes – **86%** No -**14%**